

REMARKS

We have carefully considered the Office Action dated February 8, 2006, in which claims 1-24 are rejected as obvious over the inventor's prior patent, United States Patent 5,081,715.

In response to the Office Action, we have amended claim 1 to more particularly point out the current invention. The subject matter of claim 13 is incorporated into amended claim 1, and claim 13 has been canceled.

As set forth in claim 1, as amended, the protective pad assembly consists of a base layer and a plurality of protective pads that are sized to be placed at selective locations on the base layer, to provide desired amounts of protection to particular nerves, bones, and so forth. A user may, for example, apply three layers of protection at a location that corresponds to a particular nerve, one layer of protection that corresponds to the location of a particular bone, and five layers of protection that correspond to the location of a joint. Thus, a user can customize the protection provided by the assembly to provide the protection necessary to prevent injury to a particularly vulnerable location such as one that corresponds to a nerve, protect a location from further injury and/or provide protection that minimizes unwanted movement of a joint such as the thumb. Claim 22 has also been amended to point out a customizable pad assembly for use on a hand.

The operation of the assembly of claim 1 thus differs from the assembly described in the '715 patent. The pad assembly of the '715 patent works well to protect the palm of the user's hand using protective layers that conform to the size and shape of a palm-sized

base layer. However, the assembly does not offer the customized protection provided by the pad assembly of pending claim 1, as amended, which as described in the current application is an improvement of the pad assembly to the '715 patent.

In light of the above, we respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the rejections and issue a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims, as amended.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Patricia A. Sheehan". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

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